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## **July 2002 - Injury Prevention Newsletter**

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### **Alaska News and Resources**

1. July brings tougher drunk driving laws to Alaska
2. The Child Passenger Safety Check-up Van makes it's Southeast Alaska debut

### **National News and Resources**

3. Children and In-Home Drownings
4. Seat Belt survey in Washington State shows big gains from "Click It or Ticket" project
5. CDC Injury Webcasts
6. CDC to launch new injury research agenda

### **Miscellaneous**

7. Product recalls and safety information

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- 1. July brings tougher drunk driving laws to Alaska:** as reported by the Juneau Empire July 9, 2002. On July 1 new state laws went into effect to curb drinking and driving. The new law makes the following changes:

- Raises fines for 1st time offense for DWI from \$250 to \$1,500
- Increases fines for felony DWI and felony refusal to take a blood alcohol test from \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- Cities may pass laws allowing seizure of cars, boats, and airplanes used by an operator under the influence
- The state can charge drunken drivers with a felony if convicted 2 or more times since 1/1/96, within 10 years of the new offense.
- The 10-year limit, or "look back period" for repeat convictions is removed in determining minimum sentences.

It also made changes for minors consuming or possessing alcohol:

- First offense: raised from \$100 to between \$200 and \$600 with probation and alcohol education counseling.
- Second offense: fine up to \$1,000, 3-month license revocation, 48 hours of community service work, probation and alcohol education counseling.
- Third offense: 90 days in jail, fine of up to \$1,000, 6-month license revocation, 96 hours of community service work.

When the law went into effect many in the legal community said these changes caught offenders off guard. David Mallet, a defense attorney in Juneau said a recent client who was arrested several times in the late 1960's and early 70's for drunken driving thought his most recent drunken-driving conviction would count as his first in determining the sentence. But it turned out to be his fifth. Cindy Cashen, a spokeswoman for the Juneau chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, says that it is the responsibility of each person to educate himself or herself as to what the current laws are for drunken driving.

- 2. The Child Passenger Safety Check-up Van makes it's Southeast debut:** Alaska SAFE KIDS through national grants now has two Child Safety Seat check-up vans for Alaska. With this in mind the Juneau SAFE KIDS Coalition has coordinated with other Southeast communities to provide child safety seat

check-ups throughout Southeast. The van arrived in Juneau this month and will be in the communities on the following dates:

- August 7-August 10 Angoon
- August 11-August 14 Hoonah
- August 15-August 21 Haines (during the Southeast Alaska Fair)
- August 23-August 28 Ketchikan
- August 29-September 5 Wrangell
- September 6-September 10 Petersburg
- September 11-September 17 Sitka

The van will be back in Juneau to be used during the Child Passenger Safety Technician Certification course September 16-19 and 21. " This could be your opportunity to learn how to correctly install child safety seats, how to determine which seat fits which child, and when a child is the right size for the adult seat belt system," according to Colleen McNulty, an instructor for the course. Cost of this class is \$50.00 with scholarships available for tuition and travel.

Participants will be certified through the National CPS program. If you have any questions you can contact Colleen at (907) 465-3353. For other CPS certification classes and refresher courses you can contact the Alaska SAFE KIDS office at (907) 261-3194

3. **Children and In-Home Drowning:** Staff from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recently released a report on non-pool home drowning incidents involving children under 5. From 1996-1999, CPSC was aware of 459 children under 5 who died from complications of drowning or near-drowning in products located in and around the home. The products included bathtubs, 5-gallon buckets, hot tubs, and toilets. The most frequent cause of drowning deaths was submersion in bathtubs. These included incidents involving other products used in the tub, such as bath seats or bathinettes. The children most frequently involved in the fatal drowning were those under 1 year old and the majority of the drowning did not have other products involved. Of special note is how the victim got into the bathtub. The majority were placed in the tub by a caregiver and most often with another child who was supposedly watching the victim. For the complete report you can access the CPSC at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) and search for in-home drowning.
4. **Seat Belt Survey shows big gains from "Click it or Ticket" project:** Seat belt use by Washington drivers increased to 91% as a result of this intensive law enforcement program according to research conducted by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission. Prior to the project, about 82% of Washington motorists wore their seat belts. The Memorial Day weekend death toll was cut in half from the prior year. "There were about the same number of collisions as last year over the Memorial Day weekend, but only 5 deaths this year compared to 10 last year." according to John Moffat, Commission Director. For more information about Washington's program you can visit their website at [www.wa.gov/wtsc](http://www.wa.gov/wtsc)
5. **CDC Injury Webcasts:** The CDC as part of their anniversary held 4 webcasts on injury topics during the month of June. To watch the live broadcast in Alaska you could have gotten up at 7am to catch it. However, if you missed them all is not lost. The 4 programs are still available for you to view at your leisure. They are:

- Health and Independence As We Age: Learn to Prevent Senior Falls
- The Sexual Abuse of Children: Shifting the Paradigm
- Brain Injury: From the Inside Looking Out
- Injury Symposium Featuring Lindsay Wagner

You can access them at: [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/anniversary/webcast.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/anniversary/webcast.htm)

- 6. CDC to launch new injury research agenda:** The Center for Disease Control recently released its new research agenda forecasting the direction for injury research at CDC from 2002 to 2007. "The agenda provides a blueprint for ensuring that high-priority interventions get developed, tested, and used. Implementing this agency will save lives." said Sue Binder, M.D., director of CDC's Injury Center. The agenda pinpoints 7 areas where additional research can have the greatest impact on preventing and controlling their debilitating effects.

They are: Injuries at home and in communities

Injuries occurring during sports, recreation, and exercise

Transportation-related injuries

Intimate partner violence, sexual violence and child maltreatment

Suicidal behavior

Youth violence and acute care

Rehabilitation Services

CDC will implement the research through universities across the nation, state health departments, and not-for-profit organizations engaged in injury prevention work. To view the CDC's agenda with fact sheets on these 7 areas go to:

[www.cdc.gov/ncipc](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc)

- 7. Product recalls and safety information:** The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission tracks injuries or deaths in over 15,000 consumer products. To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury, call CPSC's hotline at 800-638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at 800-638-8270. Other information and product recalls are available on their website: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

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This message has been compiled by the Section of Community Health and EMS (CHEMS), Alaska Division of Public Health and sent to subscribers of the AK-Prev and AHELP list-serves. It has also been sent as a "bcc" to others in Alaska including Public Health Centers, SAFE KIDS coalitions, Native Health Organizations, and regional EMS Councils and Coordinators who may be interested and active in injury prevention and health promotion. The purpose is to share resources, breaking news, training opportunities, product recalls, and opinions to help prevent injuries to Alaskans. Feedback and contributions are encouraged. Contributions can be directed to Zoann Murphy:

[zoann\\_murphy@health.state.ak.us](mailto:zoann_murphy@health.state.ak.us)

Link for the AK-Prev and AK-EMSC list serve: [http://chems.alaska.gov/ems\\_list\\_servers.htm](http://chems.alaska.gov/ems_list_servers.htm)

Link for AHELP list serve: <http://www.auroraweb.com/ahec>